

EXHIBIT 19



Temperature inside baking Texas prisons with no AC regularly hits 110 degrees, study finds

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Body

When Larry McCollum, a 58-year-old convicted of forgery, arrived at the Hutchins state jail in Dallas, Texas, his fellow inmates reportedly told him, "Welcome to hell."

After spending just three days in the facility, McCollum, who was overweight and had hypertension, collapsed and had a seizure. The facility had no air conditioning, and had been experiencing weather with multiple days above 100 degrees.

At the hospital, the 58-year-old's body temperature was measured at 109.8 degrees, and he fell into a coma, before dying a week later in July of 2011. His family sued the state prison system, blaming the excessive heat and poor conditions for his death.

McCollum's story, as well as a host of other heat-related deaths in Texas prison, inspired the state to implement changes to how it handles heat inside jails, but a new report says dangerous conditions persist, with cell blocks sometimes reaching temperatures of 149 degrees.

There are 100 jail units run by state officials, with an estimated 122,000 prisoners inside. Temperatures there "have been shown to regularly reach 110 degrees," according to a new report from Texas A&M's Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center. In 2018 alone, there were 79 cases of heat-related illnesses between January and October.

Less than a third of prisons in Texas are fully-air conditioned, the study found. That's even though the state faces punishing heat on a regular basis, which is only expected to get worse with the climate crisis.

"With our prisons not having air conditioning, it's a really dangerous situation," Texas A&M University researcher J Carlee Purdum testified before the state legislature last week. "When we have a heat wave such as this summer, it can potentially lead to disastrous consequences."

The report captures the often harrowing experience for inmates in baking Texas prisons, a group that's statistically overrepresented for medical and health conditions that make people vulnerable to dangers from high heat.

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"I struggle with the heat so bad," one of the more than 300 inmates surveyed for the study told the university. "I can't eat... I can't gain weight... I suffer from the heat... I get dizzy and headaches... I am weak. I have diarrhea too with leg cramps at night. I have even passed out a few times. I drink plenty of water. They do not allow respite... Please... help me."

State prison officials have defended conditions inside Texas facilities, noting that among the 100 units, 31 are fully air conditioned, 55 are partially cooled, and only 14 lack AC. Prisons in Texas, in addition to air condition, also use fans, cooling beds, and choose the coolest hours of the day to transport people, according to officials.

"We take numerous precautions to lessen the effects of hot temperatures for those incarcerated within our facilities," Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Amanda Hernandez told CNN.

"Much like those Texans who do not have access to air conditioning in their homes, the department uses an array of measures to keep inmates safe. Everyone has access to ice and water. Fans are strategically placed in facilities to move the air. Inmates have access to a fan and they can access air-conditioned respite areas when needed," she added.

The TDCJ says it scores inmates based on their vulnerability to heat and prioritises those at high risk for extra cooling measures.

The heat only looks set to get worse in prisons in the Lone Star State.

Earlier this month, as much of Europe and the US faced record-breaking heat, temperatures around 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43 degrees Celsius) were recorded near Dallas.

Last month, San Antonio recorded 17 days with high temperatures above 100F (38) — while the norm for June is just two days, reports The New York Times.

The heat was so intense the [Texas](#) power grid was likely to broke usage records as people powered up air conditioners to battle the heat.

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